DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 344 011 CE 060 737

TITLE Descriptive Study of Technical/Vocational Student Tracking in Texas.
INSTITUTION Dallas County Community Coll. District, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Austin. Community Colleges and Technical Institutes Div.
PUB DATE 30 Jun 91
NOTE 47p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Articulation (Education); *Data Collection; Needs Assessment; Outcomes of Education; Participant Satisfaction; Recordkeeping; Records Management; School Holding Power; Special Needs Students; State Surveys; Statewide Planning; Student Attrition; Student Educational Objectives; *Student Records; *Technical Education; Technical Institutes; Two Year Colleges; *Vocational Education; *Vocational Followup
IDENTIFIERS *Texas

ABSTRACT

In order to establish a baseline for future recommendations, a study was conducted on what is currently being done and to determine strengths and weaknesses in the area of technical and vocational student tracking. Mail surveys were sent to all public community/junior colleges and technical institutes in Texas; 40 of 52 surveys were returned. The measure collected information on the following: institutional demographics, articulation programs, educational goals, special populations, outcome measures, use of placement services, former students, TEX-SIS (Texas Student Information Systems) follow-up system, description of resources, LONESTAR (Longitudinal Evaluation Student Tracking and Reporting), and needs assessment. Site visits were also made to obtain information about technical and vocational student tracking procedures. Findings indicated the following: (1) few institutions tracked articulation students; (2) most schools collected information regarding students' educational goals; (3) not all institutions reported collecting information on designated special population groups under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990; (4) institutions varied widely in outcome measures used and definitions of successful performance; (5) less than half reported tracking student retention; (6) definitions, response rates, and methods of tracking former students varied greatly; and (7) 31 schools had tried to implement LONESTAR. (The survey is appended.) (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

#1130008

ED344011

DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL STUDENT TRACKING IN TEXAS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. L. Cummings

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

JUNE 30, 1991

CE 060 737

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FUNDING INFORMATION

Project Title:	An Assessment and Development of Vocational/Technical Education Student Tracking System
Project Number:	11130008
Project Date:	July 1, 1990 - June 30, 1991
Funding Source:	Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Community Colleges and Technical Institutes Division
Coordinating Board Staff Advisor:	Dr. Sally Andrade Program Director Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Community Colleges and Technical Institutes Division Austin, Texas
Contractor:	Dallas County Community College District Office of Research 701 Elm Street Dallas, Texas 75202-3299 214/746-2192
Project Staff:	Dr. Felix J. Aquino, Project Director Dr. Sharon R. Smith, Grant Manager Susan M. Wolfe, Technical Director
Disclaimer:	This publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Community Colleges and Technical Institutes Division. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgement in professional and technical matters. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board position or policy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
METHOD	3
Advisory Task Force	3
Subjects	3
Procedures	3
MEASURE	4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	6
Institutional Demographics	6
Articulation Programs and Tracking Articulated Students	7
Educational Goals	7
Special Populations	8
Outcome Measures	8
Student Retention	9
Student Satisfaction	9
Placement Service Use	9
Tracking Former Students	10
TEX-SIS Follow-Up System	11
Description of Resources	12
LONESTAR	13
Needs Assessment	15
Comparison of Coordinating Board Data and Survey Data	15
RECOMMENDATIONS	21
REFERENCES	22
APPENDIX	

INTRODUCTION

The rapid pace of technological innovation in the majority of industries in the United States will necessitate a more highly trained workforce for the 21st century (Johnston & Packer, 1987). The weight of meeting this challenge will fall heavily on the technical institutes and community colleges, which already enroll half of the nation's college freshman and where 70 percent of all students are in technical and vocational programs. Evaluation is a necessary component in the provision of quality education and training to assure quality standards are met and resources used efficiently to meet the needs of employers for a skilled workforce (State Board of Education, 1989). Demographic shifts, changing skill requirements, and changes in employer needs make it imperative that evaluation be an ongoing process (Suchman, 1967).

A meeting was held on October 28-30, 1987 to begin the preliminary planning for the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges research agenda (Palmer, 1989). The need for reliable and valid data was emphasized. Current data collection methods focus on quantity and simple descriptions; however, this is not sufficient for understanding the broader issues which emerged in the 1980's and will continue into the 1990's and beyond. A number of deficiencies have been noted in student tracking systems overall and it is feasible to assume these deficiencies also apply to the technical and vocational education tracking systems.

Previous efforts to improve student tracking in the technical and vocational education area on a national level have not been successful. The Vocational Education Data System (VEDS) was started in the mid-1970's to assess student outcomes. It was designed to gather data related to special populations (e.g., women, minorities, handicapped) in a number of program areas. The failure of this effort has been attributed to the lack of understanding by policy makers regarding the link between the information they need and the research efforts required to generate the information (Palmer, 1989). Little evidence is available to indicate that much progress has been made in this area following the VEDS efforts.

The Texas Master Plan for Vocational and Technical Education (1989 Update) supports the argument that little progress has been made in the area of tracking technical and vocational education students. The implementation of self-assessment processes to evaluate the viability of technical and vocational programs is stated as one of the strategies to meet the goal of providing technical and vocational education and training to meet employer needs for a skilled workforce. The reason cited for the failure of VEDS indicates that future efforts to improve student tracking systems would best be accomplished by those persons who will be responsible for the collection of data and those who will most often use it for decision making -- community college and technical institute representatives.

The call for accountability is being heard from several arenas using various terminologies -- quality indicators, student outcomes, measures of accountability. In a 1990 review of the literature, Palmer summed it up well by stating:

> "Once again, educators are being asked for an accounting of how education dollars are spent, for indicators of the dividends that investment yields, and for evidence of good faith efforts to improve practice."

In these times of decreasing finances the message is being issued that funding will follow the proof of having performed successfully. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990 contains numerous references to items that will necessitate documentation measures to verify that students designated under the Act as special populations are being served and their needs are being met.

Prior to making recommendations for improvement in the area of technical and vocational student tracking, it is essential to establish a baseline. In other words, it is necessary to gather information that will describe what is currently being done and determine the various strengths and weaknesses. This study was conducted to provide this baseline.

METHOD

Advisory Task Force

An advisory task force was established to guide the activities of the project and provide input from various concerned constituencies. It consisted of five representatives from community colleges, one representative from the Texas State Technical Institute System, and the director of the North Texas Community/Junior College Consortium. The grant advisor from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Community Colleges and Technical Institutes Division, served as an ex-officio member.

Subjects

Mail surveys were sent to all public community/junior colleges and technical institutes throughout the State of Texas. In those cases where multiple campuses or colleges exist, the survey forms were to be completed on a district-wide basis. Fifty-two surveys were mailed and 40 were returned for a 77% response rate.

Procedures

A pilot questionnaire was developed to assist project staff in obtaining information about technical and vocational student tracking procedures and site visits were made. During two pilot site visits, the expressed opinion of the participants was the desirability of having written materials to review before the site visit was made. A pre-site visit survey was designed and mailed to a third institution. After having made the site visit to this campus, the grant manager and technical director determined that the needed information could be collected effectively through the use of a mail survey; this method would be more financially responsible. A copy of the survey form is in the appendix of this report.

The grant manager identified a contact person at each institution by telephoning the institution and talking to the individual who has the primary responsibility for technical and vocational student tracking. This individual was informed about the study and the survey form which would be mailed to him/her and would be completed on an institutional basis with the various divisions involved in tracking technical and vocational students providing information. Efforts were made to obtain the highest possible response rate. Following the mailing of the questionnaire to each public two-year postsecondary institution in Texas, the grant manager followed-up by telephone at different intervals with those institutions who had not responded. Before running the final data, the twelve schools that had not responded were contacted by mail to give them another opportunity to submit their information.

Data will be reported in aggregate numbers in this report. No comparisons or rankings will be made between/among institutions. This report will give a picture of what is being done statewide in the area of technical and vocational student tracking and present recommendations of methods to use to become more effective.

MEASURE

The measure was developed in the Office of Research at Dallas County Community College District with input from the advisory task force and the pilot institutions. The next few paragraphs will provide a description of the topics discussed.

Institutional demographics. Demographic information collected included the type of location (rural, urban or suburban); the number of total faculty and technical/vocational faculty; enrollment figures (headcount, contact hours, and FTE) for entire student body and students enrolled in technical and vocational programs; number of applied associate degree and certificate programs; and number of applied associate degrees and certificates awarded (1989-1990).

Articulation programs. Many schools form articulation agreements defined as "a planned process linking two or more programs, educational institutions, or services that facilitates the movement of students from one educational level to the next higher level in order to eliminate delays or unnecessary duplication of instruction." These can be very useful in providing continuity for students who begin their vocational education in high school, and/or plan to continue at a four-year college. Questions were designed to determine how many of the schools that have articulation agreements (and tech-prep education programs) in place are tracking students to determine outcomes.

Educational goals. In order to determine whether the students have had successful outcomes, it is important to gather information regarding the student's goals. This set of questions was designed to determine when institutions are collecting information, how often it is collected (because of the potential for changing goals), and the methods employed for collecting goal related information.

Special populations. Technical and vocational education reporting requirements in the State of Texas require that information regarding enrollment and completion rates of certain "special populations" be reported. This question was asked to determine which special populations were being tracked at the various institutions.

Outcome measures. Questions were designed to ascertain whether information is being collected related to student performance, student retention, and student satisfaction.

Use of placement services. Questions were designed to determine whether institutions are tracking technical and vocational student use of placement services since these services are often essential to students who are training in a specific field and may need assistance to obtain relevant employment.

Former students. Former student groups that were identified include completers, graduates, non-returning students, and transfer students. The first set of questions was designed to determine how each of these groups is defined at the various institutions since they do not define these groups in the same way. The second set was designed to determine whether they are tracking these groups, the response rates obtained, when the last survey was completed, and the methods that are used. Questions were also asked to ascertain how institutions determine whether students are employed in their field of study and if the institutions are conducting employer surveys.

TEX-SIS follow-up system. The TEX-SIS system was developed and implemented in the 1970's to facilitate the information gathering efforts of the state's community colleges and technical institutes. Along with the eight components from which data can be selected, Jim Reed's Student Information Systems services the system by processing data, printing questionnaires, giving staff workshops and presentations, producing special reports, and providing various other types of support. Colleges are required to pay a fee for these services. This set of questions was developed to determine how many colleges are using this service, what components they are using, and to get their perspective on the possible strengths and weaknesses.

Description of resources. Recommendations and technical assistance for improvement of student tracking will necessitate knowing what resources the institutions currently have available. This set of questions was designed to determine what types of equipment institutions have, how accessible data are, and how many personnel are dedicated to the institutional research function.

LONESTAR: Longitudinal Evaluation Student Tracking and Reporting. The LONESTAR student tracking system was developed by NCHEMS for the Texas community colleges to provide management information for institutional improvement, provide a framework for uniform reporting of institutional effectiveness data to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and report on the effectiveness of remediation. This set of questions was developed to determine how many institutions are using this system, how successful they were in implementing the system, possible barriers to successful implementation, and the degree of adaptation and fidelity.

Needs Assessment. A checklist of possible types of technical assistance that could be offered was developed to determine where colleges felt they needed improvement. Items included various types of equipment selection and use, development of survey instruments and methods, data analysis and statistical software, and working toward more effective intra- and inter-agency cooperation. A question was included to find out whether they preferred on-site consultation, workshops, or written materials.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Institutional Demographics

Table 1 presents an overview of the demographic characteristics of the responding institutions. Seven institutions defined technical and vocational enrollment as "number of students enrolled in at least one vocational/technical course" and 27 defined it as "number of students who have declared a vocational/technical major." This difference in definition should be remembered when looking at the figures relating to student vocational/technical counts.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Responding Institutions

Location

Location	Frequency	Percent
Rural	18	45.0
Urban	12	30.0
Suburban	9	22.5
Combination	1	2.5

Number of Faculty

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Total Full-Time	161.14	153.03	13	658
Total Part-Time	183.74	354.29	28	2,044
Full-Time Vocational/Technical	78.32	124.13	12	587
Part-Time Vocational/Technical	47.00	35.05	3	125

Headcount, Contact Hours and FTE

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Fall 1990 Headcount	6,352.32	9,197.10	962	53,085
Vocational/Technical Headcount	3,199.07	4,660.39	317	22,824
Fall 1990 Contact Hours	1,110,850.62	1,389,839.86	20,083	7,904,688
Vocational/Technical Contact Hours	440,605.95	539,182.08	4,541	2,547,752
Fall 1990 FTE	4,098.00	5,118.87	46	26,703
Vocational/Technical FTE	2,360.75	5,429.06	46	25,131

Programs and Graduates

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Applied Associate Degree Programs	27.43	19.15	0	90
Certificate Programs	20.03	11.62	2	52
Applied Associate Degrees Awarded	254.82	259.45	0	1,105
Certificates Awarded	163.63	243.36	0	1,420

Articulation Programs and Tracking Articulated Students

Only eleven of the institutions reported that they identify whether a student had participated in a high school vocational program. Identification methods reported included high school transcripts (5), student self-report (4), and automated student placement follow-up system (1).

Thirty-two of the schools reported they have articulation agreements with high schools. Twenty-one of the schools reported they have articulation agreements with four-year colleges. Four of these schools track articulated students separately.

Twelve schools have tech-prep agreements with high schools, and three have extended tech-prep agreements (high school and four-year college). Two of these schools track their tech-prep students separately. The following are the various functional areas that were reported as having responsibility for the planning/implementation of articulation programs (including tech-prep): articulation & transfer programs, career & continuing education, dean of admissions, dean of instruction/vice president of instruction, department chairs, director for program development, enrollment management, extended programs, individual programs, technical and vocational area, pre-employment programs coordinator, resource development, student services/student development services, and vice president.

The small number of institutions that are tracking articulated students indicates that little is being done to evaluate the effectiveness of articulation programs or to determine whether they are accomplishing their goals. In order to determine whether improvements need to be made and what those improvements might be, it is essential that colleges begin implementing procedures to follow students who participate in articulation programs.

Educational Goals

Thirty-six of the schools reportedly collect information pertaining to the students' educational goals. The reported times of collection of this information were at the time of application (4), during the admissions process (13), during registration (16), during freshman orientation (1), during the first week of class (1), and on an entrance exam (1). Frequency of collection varied and included one time when the student begins school (13), each semester or registration period (14), once a year (1), twice -- application and when the student is leaving (1), and every time ASSET is given (1). Methods used to collect information include counselor interviews (5), application/admissions forms (12), registration forms (4), student data forms (6), faculty advisors (1), surveys or questionnaires (3), LONESTAR (3), and ASSET (1).

Most schools are collecting information regarding students' educational goals. Those schools that collect information regarding goals each time the student registers will be most able to determine whether students' goals are changing, particularly those students who enter school without clear goals. If a student's goal changes and this is not detected, the outcome measure will be based on the original goal and will therefore be inappropriate. Clarification of goals can be one measure of effectiveness which can be helpful in improving retention and increasing graduation and/or completion rates.

Special Populations

Special populations that were reportedly tracked varied across schools. Table 2 shows the populations and the number that are tracking each.

Table 2. Special Population Tracking*

Population	Number Tracking	Population	Number Tracking
Women	39	Physically challenged/handicapped	38
Learning disabilities	35	Limited English proficiency (LEP)	33
Economically disadvantaged	39	Minorities	37
Adults in need of training/retraining	16	Single parents	35
Displaced homemakers	34	Gender bias/sex stereotyping	28
Pell Grant recipients	33	First-generation students	24
Dislocated workers	1	"At-risk" students	2
Prison inmates	1		

* One institution left this section blank, therefore, N = 39.

Under Carl Perkins' legislation, the enrollment report must contain information on designated special population groups. Since not all institutions reported collecting information on required categories (handicapped, LEP, minorities, single parents, and gender bias/sex stereotyping), methods need to be incorporated to obtain data on these groups. Methods of data collection might already be in place and the institution(s) just failed to check this category. Other areas that are being overlooked include dislocated workers, adults in need of training/retraining, and first- generation college students. Two of the schools reported they are tracking "at-risk" students; however, their failure to define "at-risk" makes it difficult to draw any conclusions from this. There needs to be a standard definition for the term "at-risk" if reliable information is to be collected.

Outcome Measures

Seventeen of the institutions used methods other than grades to measure performance. Other measures included the TASP (Texas Academic Skills Program) or Pre-TASP test (10), exit or special program exams (3), board certifications (5), and employer ratings (4). Methods for measuring outcomes included testing (6), longitudinal tracking (2), surveys (4), state agency reports (3), instructor reports (2), data from computer services (1), and counseling center information (1).

When asked how "successful student performance" was defined, there was some variance across schools. Definitions included earning a "C" or better in all classes (15), earning a "C" or better in developmental courses (2), earning a "C" or better in courses related to major (1), earning a "D" or better in all courses with "C" average to graduate (14), using "C" or better for purposes of LONESTAR (1), using "D" or better for purposes of LONESTAR (1), earning a "D" or better for support courses (1), and demonstrated proficiency for competency (1).

Institutions varied widely in the outcome measures used as well as definitions of successful student performance, even when using LONESTAR. This makes it difficult to compare success rates across institutions. A number of institutions defined success by a grade received in a course and they varied as to whether a grade of "C" or "D" is necessary for success. Recognizing that grades of "C" and" D" vary across courses and instructors, one can see that the problem of accurately measuring successful student performance is compounded.

Student Retention

Eighteen of the institutions reported that they track student retention in technical and vocational programs. Methods included using registration records (8), LONESTAR or other computerized data (7), annual reports (1), and questionnaires (2).

Definitions of persistence were: returning for the next long semester/two consecutive long terms (13), returning for one of the next two long semesters (3), returning during the academic year (1), returning for the next semester (1), or returning in the fall if registered during the previous school year (2).

Less than half of the respondents are reportedly tracking student retention in technical and vocational programs. One measure of success for a technical or vocational program is its ability to enroll students and subsequently retain them. If this retention information is not monitored, schools are failing to assess this important success measure. Definitions of persistence varied across schools. The lack of a common definition could mean that schools discussing persistence may be comparing unlike groups.

Student Satisfaction

Nineteen of the institutions reported that they measure current student satisfaction with technical and vocational programs and thirty-four reported they measure satisfaction for former students. Methods employed to determine student satisfaction included survey responses (26), student evaluation of course/program (6), a combination survey response and course evaluation (3), a combination of survey response and comments on withdrawal forms (1), and a combination of surveys and LONESTAR (1).

Most schools are determining satisfaction as reported by former students; however, only nineteen are measuring satisfaction of current students. The optimal situation would entail employing multiple measures and looking at both current and former students. By monitoring process and outcome it is possible to ascertain where changes may be necessary. In the future, it would be useful to gather information regarding specific questions asked to determine satisfaction. Reliability of scaled items and validity of questions is also uncertain at this time.

Placement Service Use

Fourteen institutions reported that they track placement use by current technical and vocational students and fifteen track use by former technical and vocational students. Methods included a computerized database (4), student records/student placement forms (7), and employer follow-up and/or student surveys (7).

The overall goal of technical and vocational education is employability. One service that can facilitate this is the college's job placement service. Less than half of the respondents were tracking placement use by current and/or former technical and vocational students. One important component of evaluating the effectiveness of this service is determination of use and placement rates; therefore, colleges need to implement systems to monitor technical and vocational student use.

Tracking Former Students

Completers. Definitions of "completers" varied across institutions. These included having received a degree or certificate (26), having completed a required series of courses (6), or having successfully completed their educational goals (7). Thirty-six of the respondents reported that they track their completers. Reported response rates ranged from 10% to 75% with a mean of 40.06%. Most respondents reported completing their last survey in 1990 (18); however, some had not surveyed since 1989 (3), and others had completed theirs as recently as 1991 (6). Three respondents conducted their surveys on an ongoing basis. Methods included mail surveys (32), telephone survey (1), and a combination of the two (3).

Graduates and Certificates. Thirty-nine of the respondents reported that they track their graduates of applied associates degree programs and all track graduates of their certificate programs. (Note: One institution does not award applied associates degrees, only certificates.) Reported response rates ranged from 10% to 86%. The mean response rate for associate degree recipients was 41.78% and the mean response rate for those who had received certificates was 38.94%. A majority of respondents reported they had completed their last survey of graduates in 1990 (23) with the remainder completing their last survey in 1989 (2) or 1991 (5) with one respondent reporting it surveys on an ongoing basis. The method most frequently employed is a mail survey (35-degrees;36-certificates); however, one institution tracks graduates by telephone survey and three use a combination of mail and telephone surveys. The following are the various functional areas that were reported as having responsibility for tracking the graduates of applied associate degree and certificate programs: institutional research/planning & research (9), counseling/vocational counseling/guidance services (6), placement/placement & follow-up/job placement office (5), student services (4), administration (1), admissions (1), instruction (1), technical and vocational area (1), and program development (1).

Non-Returning Students. Definitions of non-returning students varied across institutions. Reported definitions were students not returning for the fall semester (5), not returning for the next long semester (18), not returning for one full academic year (5), not returning for two consecutive long semesters (4), or not returning in three to nine months (1). Twenty-six of the respondents reported that they track their non-returning students. The mean reported response rate was 26.84% and response rates ranged from 13% to 93%. Most respondents reported they had completed their last survey of non-returning students during 1990 (12); two had completed their last survey in 1989, five in 1991, one in 1987, and one institution reported surveying non-returning students on an ongoing basis. Twenty-two of the institutions reported that they use mail surveys, two use telephone surveys, and two use a combination mail and phone surveys.

Transfer Students. Institutions varied in terms of the number of credits a student had to take at that institution before transferring to be considered a transfer student. Reported number of credits ranged from no minimum/enrolled (9) to twenty or more credits or graduate (2). Other responses were one or any credit (12), three or more credits (4), nine or more credits (1), and fifteen or more credits (2). Eighteen institutions reported that they track transfer students. The mean reported response rate was 46.4% with rates ranging from 20% to 100% for the five institutions which reported their transfer rates. Methods used for tracking were reports from senior institutions (2), surveys (10), a combination of reports from senior institutions and surveys (4), and electronic transcript network (2).

Additional Follow-Up Information. Fifteen of the institutions reported they use the same survey forms and methods for all groups and seventeen reported they use different forms or methods. Twelve respondents reported they use methods other than surveys to track former students. Methods included using other records or forms (5), using other reports (2), using electronic means (2), using telephone surveys (2), and a combination of methods (1).

Employment and Employer Surveys. Thirty-three of the respondents rely on self-report data to determine whether students are employed in their field of study. Two institutions obtain the information from official records and one relies on self-report plus telephone follow-up by departmental heads. All (40) schools reported they conduct employer surveys and identify the employers from the graduate/completer survey. The shortest time between student completion and survey of employers ranged from one to thirteen months (mean = 4.81 months) and the longest time ranged from four to twenty-two months (mean = 11.47 months). Most respondents had completed their last employer survey in 1990 (21); however, nine respondents had completed in 1991, one in 1989, and three survey on an ongoing basis. The mean response rate was 54.92% and response rates ranged from as low as 5% to as high as 91%.

Definitions, response rates, and methods varied greatly across institutions. Some of this can be attributed to different forms, methods, and populations served. Some institutions reported tracking a sample, whereas others reported tracking the population under consideration. If a sample is used, procedures should be utilized to insure reliable outcomes. Some institutions reported response rates as low as 10% on follow-up of former students and 5% on follow-up involving employers of former students. These low response rates undermine the level of confidence that can be placed on the reliability and validity of results. Development of systems that will allow for collection of data from sources other than surveys and self-reports is expected to alleviate some of these problems (for example, obtaining employment wage records and using electronic transcript networks). Effective implementation and use of these systems would be enhanced by development of a common set of definitions.

TEX-SIS Follow-Up System

Thirty-four of Texas institutions use the services of Dr. Jim Reed's Student Information Systems. Twenty-five of the responding institutions reported using the services of Jim Reed. Table 3 presents the reported frequencies of institutions using the various components of the system.

Table 3. Frequencies of Institutions Using Components of TEX-SIS Student Information Systems

Component	Number	Component	Number
Students' Educational Intent	2	Employer Follow-Up	25
Withdrawal Follow-Up	3	Adult Vocational/Continuing Education Follow-Up	2
Non-Returning Student Follow-Up	22	Occupational Completer and Follow-Up Reporting	7
Graduate Follow-Up	25	TEX-SIS JOBS	2

Reported strengths of using Dr. Reed's services included the opportunity to obtain reports with statewide comparisons (10), the availability of consultation services (8), having a standardized instrument (6), and convenience (10). Weaknesses reported were expense (2), low response rates (9), the lack of data relevant to the particular institution (2), and that not all institutions participate (1). Three respondents reported there were no weaknesses. Eleven institutions reported they had used Jim Reed's services in the past. Reasons for discontinuing were expense (6), that it did not meet their needs (2), they had developed their own system (3), and that the institution felt it could do a better job (2).

More than half of the respondents are using the services of Dr. Jim Reed's consulting company; however, many are not taking full advantage of all of the services that are offered. One reason for this might be the expense involved. Institutions may be using only those services necessary for them to meet state reporting requirements (graduate and employer follow-up).

Description of Resources

Thirty-nine of the schools reported that they keep student records on a mainframe and only one school reported that it does not. Five schools reported that they keep some or all student records on a personal computer (PC). Twenty-one schools reported that they do all of their student tracking on a mainframe, nine do it all on a PC, four use both types of computing environments, and one school reports that it is doing tracking "by hand." Twenty-nine institutions reportedly have PCs available for purposes of student tracking. The number of PCs available ranged from one to fifty-six with a mean of 7.6. Over half (64%) of those responding to this question reported having one or two PCs available for tracking purposes.

When respondents were asked to rate the process for accessing student records for purposes of tracking student populations, most respondents reported it as difficult (12) or moderately difficult (10). Other responses given were very easy (3), easy (4), and very difficult (8). The mean rating was 3.49 on a five-point scale (1=very easy to 5=very difficult). Reported areas of the schools with access to student records were any office (6), administration (7), research (17), instructional areas (4), counseling (10), student services (9), computer services (5), placement (3), admissions and registrar (18), and financial aid (5).

Twenty-one of the respondents reported that they have a separate institutional research office and nineteen reported that it is included under another functional area. Other reported areas were computer services (1), student services/development (4), registrar/admissions (1), administration (2), instructional area (2), technical and vocational education (2), counseling (1), and various other areas (6).

Staffing of institutional research varied across respondents. The number of full-time professional (FTP) staff ranged from zero to three and part-time professional (PTP) staff ranged from zero to two. The number of full-time support (FTS) staff ranged from zero to three and part-time support (PTS) staff ranged from zero to two. Table 4 shows the responses reported for the number of personnel responsible for the function of institutional research.

Table 4. Staffing for Institutional Research Function

People	Survey Responses			
Number	FTP	PTP	FTS	PTS
1	16	10	16	10
2	6	1	2	2
3	2		1	
Σ	34	12	23	14

The following were reported as the roles of the faculty in setting priorities for institutional research: advisory role (5), request studies (5), make recommendations (1), evaluator role (1), minimal role (1), and no role (8). Others that were reported as setting or determining the priorities for institutional research were: Council on Institutional Effectiveness (2), Deans' Council (1), Executive Council (1), Research Committee (1), chancellor and vice chancellor (1), president (1), deans (1), and division chairs (1).

Most schools have adequate computing resources available to implement effective tracking procedures; however, many find them difficult to use for tracking students. It may be useful to develop easier methods that would allow persons without extensive computer skills to participate. It would also be helpful to provide training to increase skill levels of college staff so they could more effectively take advantage of available technologies. Staffing of institutional research offices varied across institutions; however, this could partly be a function of the size variance. Future analysis may look at institutional size as an explanatory factor with the assumption that smaller institutions would not have as many resources, or as much need, to have a separate function.

LONESTAR

Thirty-one schools reported that they had tried to implement LONESTAR. Those who did not try reported the following reasons implementation was not attempted: administrative decision (1), cost/funding (2), existing problems of LONESTAR (1), lack of personnel (1), not priority item at institution (2), TASP reporting feature missing (1), and time factor (1). Of the nine institutions that had not attempted to implement LONESTAR, six stated they had no plans to use LONESTAR in the future, one stated its use was questionable, and two left this question blank. Three of the schools that had tried to implement LONESTAR state they would not use the system in the future -- one having determined that its in-house system was better. Therefore, nine institutions do not plan to use LONESTAR for tracking students.

The number of schools who reported successful implementation was nine; however, sixteen reported that they were still in the implementation process. Five schools had been unsuccessful. Reasons cited for lack of success were the following: data hard to collect and use; too many records for PC; program takes too long to run; insufficient staffing; no time to implement SPSS -- no one knowledgeable; lack of interest; and lack of statewide consensus/mandate for its use.

The number of months it took to produce the first report ranged from one to twenty-four (mean = 9.6 months). The number of people working on implementation ranged from one to ten (mean = 3.09). Twenty-one of the respondents reported that they had problems with LONESTAR implementation. Problems included time/scheduling (9), lack of personnel (5), need to make modifications (4), need to revise currently used forms to collect information (3), insufficient computer space on PC (2), uploading and downloading data (2), extracting data (2), lack of cooperation between departments (1), inconsistent records (1), programming errors in LONESTAR software (1), and data collection procedures (1). Nine of the respondents reported that they had made adaptations -- three combining programs and/or files, two recoding the SPSS programs, one changing definitions, and three making changes to adapt the reports to their particular institutions. Nineteen institutions reported that they are still maintaining their files, but only eight are producing any reports. The reports produced include some that are not the standard ones developed for LONESTAR. Reasons cited for discontinuing maintaining the files included that it was too much work (1), lack of interest (2), time factors (2), and that it resulted in duplication of efforts (1).

Most institutions have at some point been involved in LONESTAR. Responses indicate that this system requires a high demand for personnel and time which would be difficult for those institutions who do not have one or both of these resources. The section on resources indicated that many institutions do not have large institutional research capabilities; therefore, they probably would not have the personnel available to implement this time-consuming tracking system. Implementation of this system sometimes requires more than simply fitting data elements to the program. Many institutions had to revise forms and data collection procedures to accommodate the data elements. One institution reportedly changed definitions of certain data elements. Considering that one of the expressed strengths of this statewide system was to develop a system that would allow statewide comparability, this threat to fidelity of data would defeat that purpose. At this time, it appears that LONESTAR has proven to be a useful tool for those institutions that have the capabilities to fully implement it. Statewide implementation appears to be unlikely at this time.

Needs Assessment

A needs assessment was included in the survey to obtain information on areas where technical assistance concerning follow-up procedures/methods would be beneficial to each institution. Results of the needs assessment are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Interest Expressed in Various Types of Technical Assistance

Type of Assistance	Number	Type of Assistance	Number
Personal Computer Selection	4	Personal Computer Use	7
Local Area Network (LAN) Selection	2	LAN Use	2
Mainframe Computer Selection	2	Mainframe Use	3
Available PC Software	11	Survey Development	12
Survey Methodology	14	Statistical Data Analysis	14
Mainframe Statistical Software Use	7	PC Statistical Software Use	12
Implementation of Tracking Procedures	15	Ways to Increase Response Rates	28
Organizational Development (Coordination)	16	Interagency Coordination	11
Reporting Procedures	14		

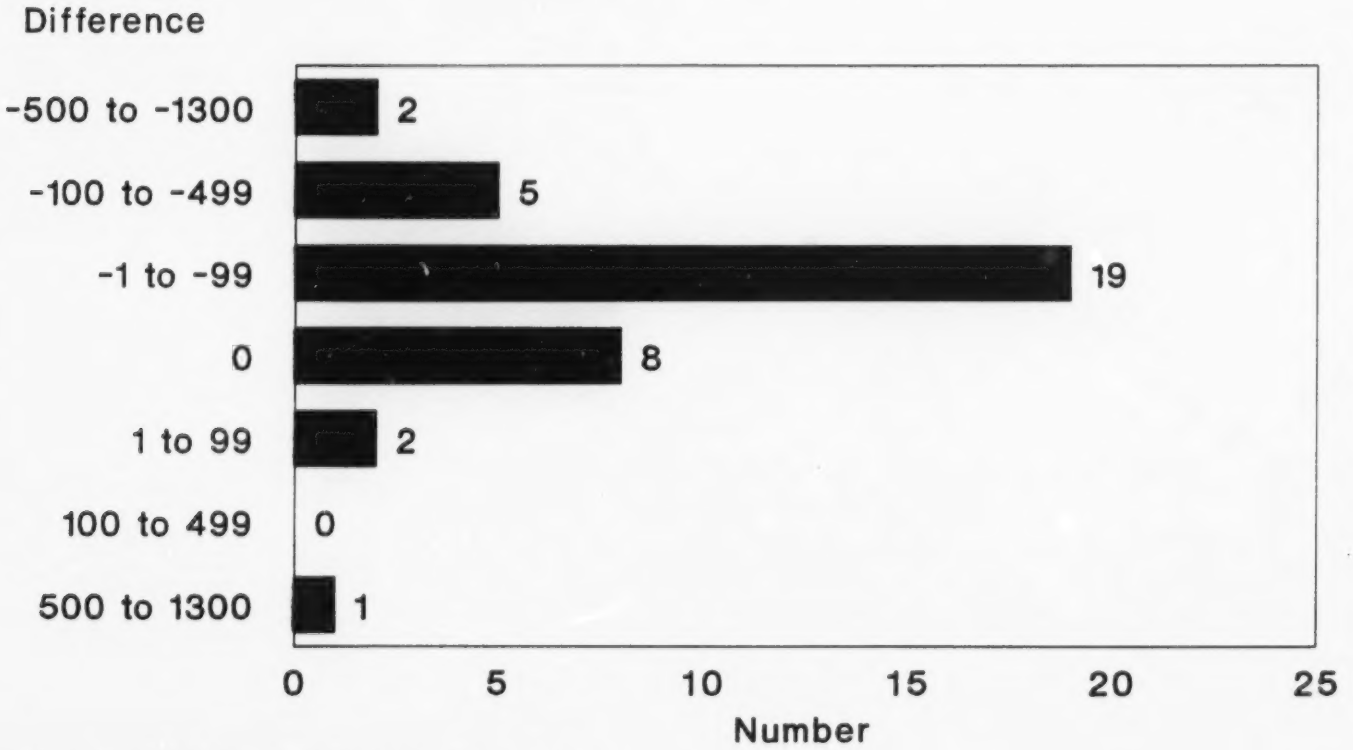
Types of assistance preferred most were workshops or seminars (31), written materials (28), and on-site consultation (20).

Results of the needs assessment indicate that many institutions share concern regarding low response rates based on the number who checked that item. Other areas that showed high interest included organizational development for more effective cooperation between departments, implementation of tracking procedures, survey methodology, reporting procedures, and statistical data analysis. Types of assistance most preferred were written materials and workshops; therefore, combining these two would provide the optimal method of dissemination.

Comparison of Coordinating Board Data and Survey Data

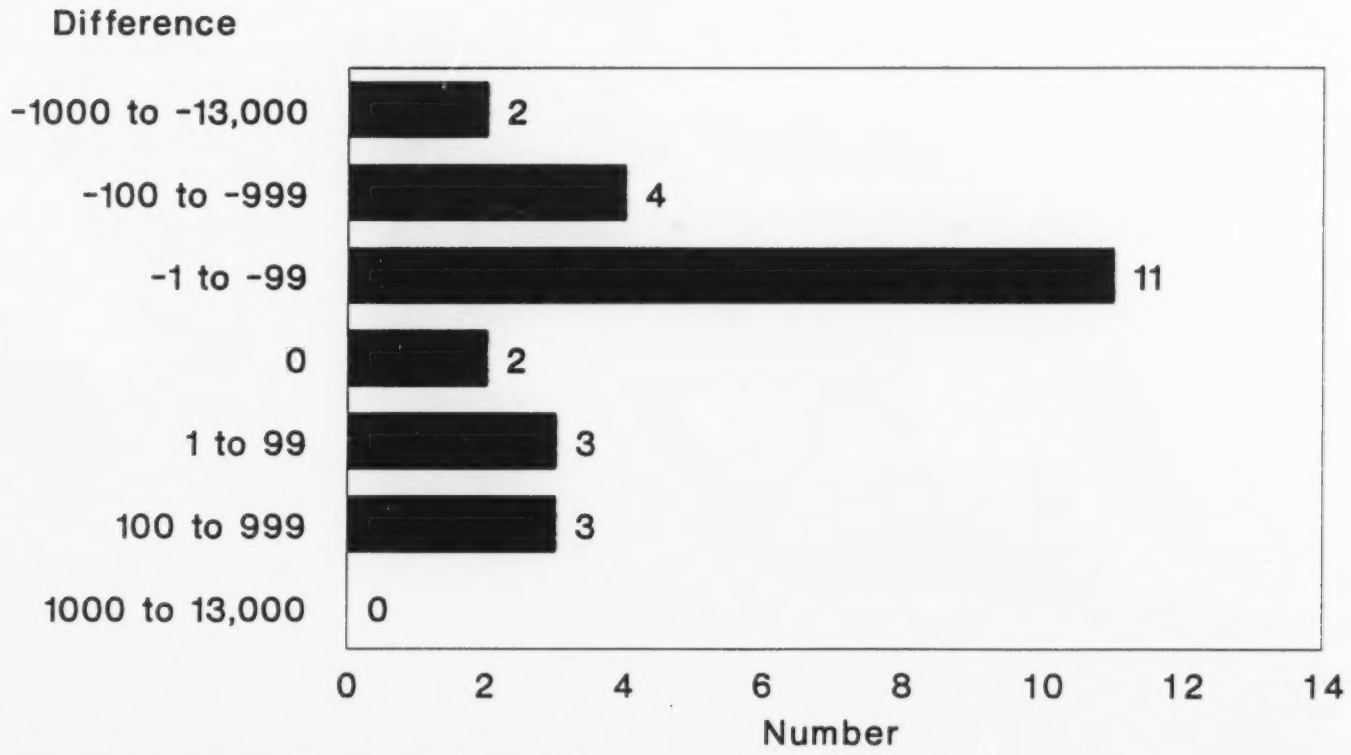
Figures were obtained from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for a few of the categories also included on the survey and comparisons made to determine the differences between these data and numbers reported on the survey. The following graphs representing the differences between these two sets of data show that either respondents did not report accurately on the survey form or to the Coordinating Board. This brings into question the reliability of technical and vocational student tracking data and indicates a possible need for more accurate and reliable reporting procedures.

Total Enrollment Differences Between Fall 1990 Coordinating Board Data and Survey Report Data



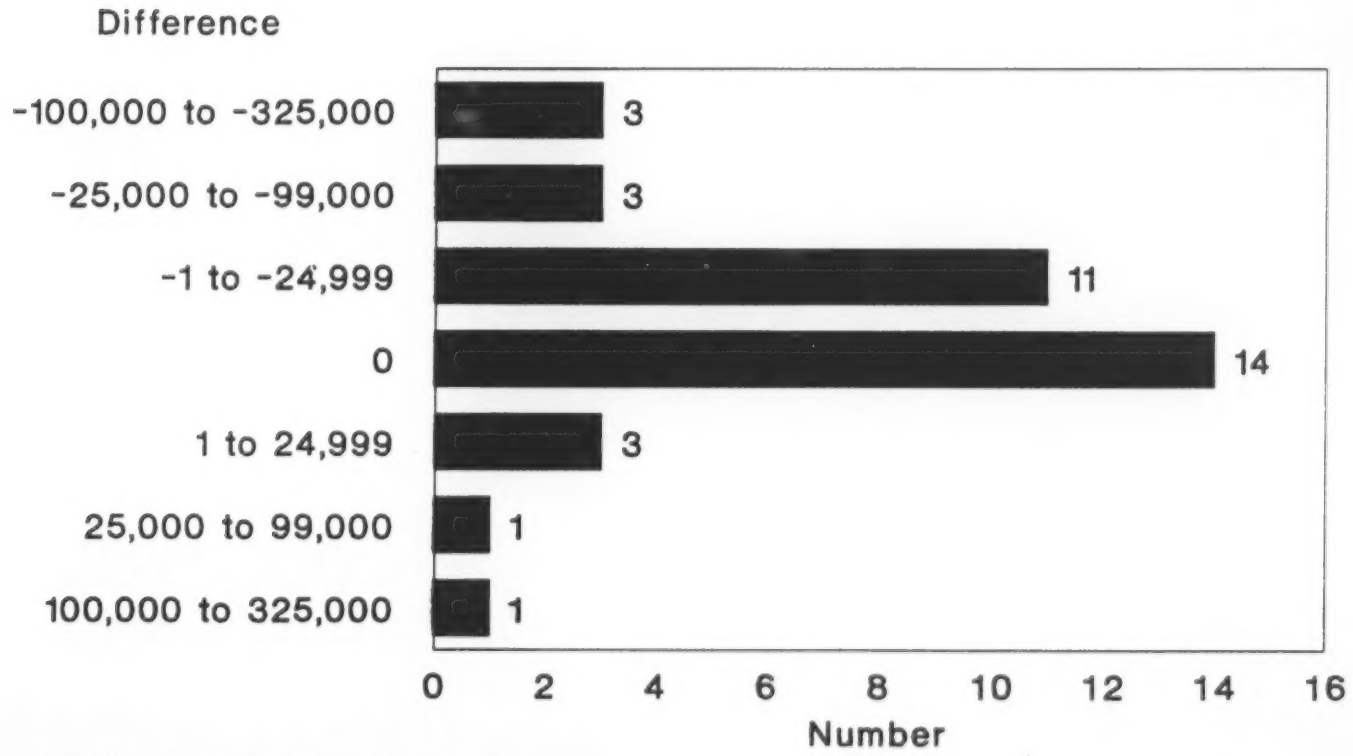
Negative figures mean numbers reported to the Coordinating Board were less than numbers reported on the survey.

Declared Tech/Voc Majors
Differences Between Fall 1990
Coordinating Board and Survey Data



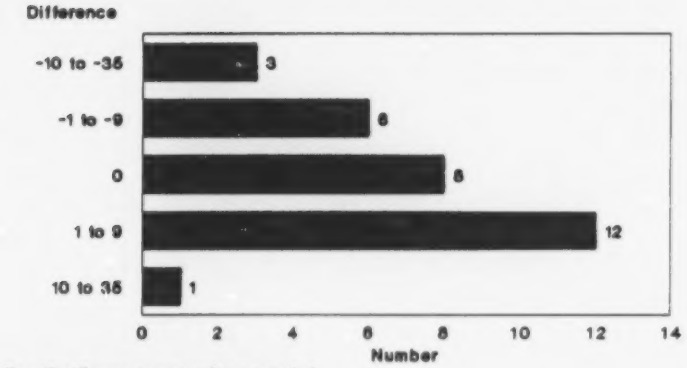
Negative figures mean numbers reported to the Coordinating Board were less than numbers reported on the survey.

Tech/Voc Contact Hour Differences Between Fall 1990 Coordinating Board Data and Survey Data



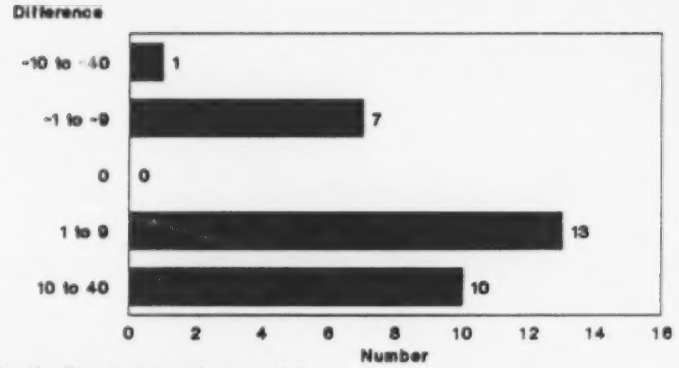
Negative figures mean numbers reported to the Coordinating Board were less than numbers reported on the survey.

Applied Associate Program Differences Between Coordinating Board Data and Survey Data



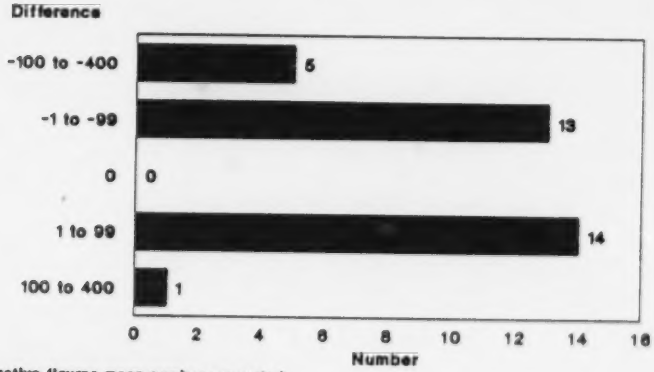
Negative figures mean numbers reported to the Coordinating Board were less than numbers reported on the survey.

Certificate Program Differences Between Coordinating Board Data and Survey Data



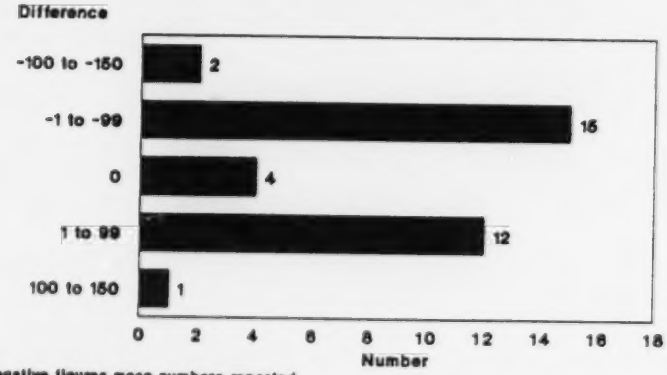
Negative figures mean numbers reported to the Coordinating Board were less than numbers reported on the survey.

Applied Associate Degrees Awarded Differences Between Coordinating Board Data and Survey Data (1989-90)



Negative figures mean numbers reported to the Coordinating Board were less than numbers reported on the survey.

Certificates Awarded Differences Between Coordinating Board Data and Survey Data (1989-90)



Negative figures mean numbers reported to the Coordinating Board were less than numbers reported on the survey.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create guidelines (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board) to insure the collection of reliable data.
   a. Establish common definitions (technical and vocational student, etc.) to be used by institutions in order to collect comparable data.
   b. Determine a standard method for calculating return rates.
   c. Standardize sampling procedures.
   d. Develop better measures for determining student satisfaction that control for reliability and validity (e.g. internally consistent scales and groups of questions rather than single items).

2. Develop a cooperative environment on each campus regarding the collection of student outcome information since numerous areas have responsibility for the collection and reporting of information.

3. Determine feasibility of the development of software with available forms for printout to save time and decrease error in reporting of data.

4. Provide information to the Coordinating Board in a format where the reentry of information is unnecessary.

5. Conduct workshops for postsecondary personnel who have responsibility for tracking technical and vocational students to increase their skill levels enabling them to take advantage of available technologies.

REFERENCES

Johnson, W.B., & Packer, A.E. (1987). Workforce 2000: work and workers for the twenty-first century. Indianapolis: Hudson Institute.

Palmer, J. (1990). Accountability through student tracking: a review of the literature. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges.

Palmer, J. (1990). Trends and issues: student tracking systems at community colleges. In: T.H. Bers (ed.) Using Student Tracking Systems Effectively. New Directions for Community Colleges, no. 66. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

State Board of Education and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (November, 1989). Career Opportunities in Texas: A Master Plan for Vocational and Technical Education. (1989 Update).

Suchman, E.A. (1967). Evaluation research: principles and practice in public service and social action programs. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

APPENDIX

SURVEY CHANGES

If this survey were to be used again, the following changes would be recommended:

1. Change demographic location information of rural, suburban, and urban to population counts.

2. Put date on question asking for faculty counts and ask for dates the follow-up surveys covered to insure collecting data from same time frame.

3. List only two categories for programs -- applied associate degrees and certificates; then use only these two categories when asking for degrees and certificates awarded.

4. Omit completers category when asking for follow-up information since most institutions define completers as graduates of applied associate degree and certificate programs.

5. Include information that has been obtained from this study in the form of items to be checked since institutions are more apt to check items than list information.

6. Make clear the difference between using the consulting services of Dr. Jim Reed and using the TEX-SIS forms.

7. Ask questions to ascertain whether institutions measure reliability and validity of survey questions.

8. Ask questions to determine sampling procedures.

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL STUDENT TRACKING QUESTIONNAIRE

Please list the names and titles of everyone who provided information for this questionnaire. Designate one individual as a contact person in case we need to contact your institution. Please include the phone number for this individual.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

We thank you for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire to ascertain the state of student tracking in vocational/technical **credit programs** in Texas. Though the questionnaire appears lengthy, we hope that you will find it easy to complete. It has been designed so you can respond in many areas by circling your response [(Y) N] or filling in a blank. Also, your written comments and/or suggestions are welcomed. You might find it helpful to review the entire survey before answering.

We want you to understand that your responses will not be compared to any other institution and there will be no reporting by institution name. The final report on this project will include aggregate numbers.

When you return this questionnaire to us, please include copies of surveys and other forms that are used by your institution to gather information concerning students (examples: application form, follow-up forms, instructor evaluation form, etc.).

If you have any questions, please call Sharon Smith at 214/746-2163.

Thanks!!

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL STUDENT TRACKING
DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

Name of Institution: _____ Location:_____

Check the one which best describes the location of your institution.
Rural _____ Suburban_____ Urban_____

Please provide the figures for the following:
Total Faculty (full-time):_____
Total Faculty (part-time):_____
Vocational/Technical Faculty (full-time):_____
Vocational/Technical Faculty (part-time):_____

Please provide the figures (**unduplicated**) for the following categories:
Total Enrollment (Fall 1990)
Headcount:_____ Contact Hours:_____ FTE:_____
Vocational/Technical Enrollment (Fall 1990)
Headcount:_____ Contact Hours:_____ FTE:_____
How is vocational/technical enrollment defined for your institution?
___ Number of students enrolled in at least one vocational/technical course
___ Number of students who have declared a vocational/technical major
___ Other (please specify): _____

_____

Please complete the ones that apply to your institution.

Number of Associate in Applied Science Degree Programs:_____
Number of Associate in Applied Arts Degree Programs:_____
Number of Associate in Applied Arts and Sciences Degree Programs:_____
Number of Certificate Programs:_____
Number of Other Vocational/Technical Programs (specify type as well as number):
Type:_____ Number:_____

Number of Associate in Applied Science Degrees Awarded (Program Year 1989-1990):_____
Number of Associate in Applied Arts Degrees Awarded (Program Year 1989-1990):_____
Number of Associate in Applied Arts and Sciences Degrees Awarded (Program Year 1989-1990):_____
Number of Certificates Awarded (Program Year 1989-1990):_____
Number of Other Vocational/Technical Degrees/Certificates Awarded (Program Year 1989-1990):
Type:_____ Number:_____

ENROLLED STUDENTS AND THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Articulation Programs (Vocational/Technical)

Definition: A planned process linking two or more programs, educational institutions, or services that facilitates the movement of students from one educational level to the next higher level in order to eliminate delays or unnecessary duplication of instruction.

Does your institution identify whether a student has participated in a high school vocational program? Y N

If yes, how?_____

_____

Are there program articulation agreements (advanced placement/time-shortened methods) with high schools? Y N
If yes, with how many high schools? ____

Are there program articulation agreements (advanced placement/time-shortened methods) with four-year colleges? Y N
If yes, with how many colleges? ____

What functional area is responsible for articulation (advanced placement/time-shortened methods) at your campus/district?_____

Are articulated (advanced placement/time-shortened methods) students tracked separately from other vocational/technical students? Y N

If yes, how?_____

_____

(2+2) Tech-Prep Education Programs

Definition: An integrated, cooperatively developed, competency-based, four-year program of study which begins in the junior year of high school and leads to an advanced Associate in Applied Sciences degree. [Graduate has technical skills beyond those obtained in traditional Associate in Applied Science degree programs.]

Do (2+2) tech-prep education programs exist with high schools? Y N
If yes, with how many high schools? ____

Do extended (2+2+2) tech-prep education programs exist with four-year colleges? Y N
If yes, with how many colleges? ____

What functional area is responsible for tech-prep education program development/implementation?

_____

Are tech-prep education students tracked separately from other vocational/technical students? Y N

If yes, how?_____

_____

Educational Goals

Is information regarding students' educational goals collected? Y N

If yes, at what time is this information collected?_____How often?_____

What is the method for collecting this information?_____

_____

_____

Special Populations

Check the populations for which your institution has a method for identifying those participating in vocational/technical credit programs.

_____women
_____individuals with disabilities
___ physical ___ learning
_____individuals with limited English proficiency
_____economically disadvantaged students
_____minorities
_____adults who are in need of training and retraining
_____single parents
_____displaced homemakers
_____individuals who participate in programs designed to eliminate gender bias and sex stereotyping
_____Pell Grant recipients
_____first-generation college students

Are there any other groups your institution would define as "special populations"? Y N

Which groups? _____

Outcome Measures

Does your institution use any ways other than grades to measure **student performance**? Y N

(Example: Does your institution use results of TASP as an outcome measure?)

Please describe. _____

_____

How are these data collected?_____

_____

Some institutions define successful student performance as having obtained a grade of "C" or better; others define it as having obtained a grade of "D" or better. How does your institution define successful student performance?

_____

_____

_____

Does your institution track **student retention** (student persistence) within vocational/technical programs?
Y N

How are these data collected?_____

_____

Some institutions define student persistence as returning for the next long semester; others define it as returning for one of the next two long semesters. How does your institution define student persistence?

_____

_____

Does your institution measure **student satisfaction** with vocational/technical programs
for currently enrolled students? Y N
for former students? Y N

If **yes**, please provide the following information:

1. How is "student satisfaction" operationally defined? _____

_____

_____

2. Does your institution use a sample or population? S P

3. What measurement tools are employed? _____

_____

_____

Use of Placement Services (job placement)

Does your institution track vocational/technical student use of its placement services? Y N

If yes, is this for currently enrolled students? Y N
for former students? Y N

If yes, how does your institution track use of placement services?_____

_____

_____

_____

FORMER STUDENTS

Definitions: Please define the following terms according to your institution's policies.

[Note: Some institutions classify students as completers if they have completed a required series of courses of a program even though these students do not receive an Associate in Applied Science degree or a certificate. How does your institution define completers?]

Completers:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

[Note: What is the length of time which must expire before a non-enrolled student is classified as non-returning?]

Non-returning students: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

[Note: What is the number of credits which must be taken at your institution before a student can be counted as a transfer student from the institution?]

Transfer student: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Follow-up Methods

Instructions: Please explain the follow-up procedures used for your **former students** by (a) telling us whether or not your institution tracks the given categories, (b) if tracked, what method is used, (c) which functional area is responsible for doing the tracking, (d) whether a sample (S) or population (P) is tracked, (e) the response rate your institution has experienced, and (f) the date the last survey was conducted.

	Track	Functional Area Responsible	Sample or Population	Response Rate	Date of Last Survey
Completers	Y N	_____	S P	_____	_____

Method: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

	Track	Functional Area Responsible	Sample or Population	Response Rate	Date of Last Survey
Graduates of Associates in Applied Degree Programs	Y N	_____	S P	_____	_____

Method: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

	Track	Functional Area Responsible	Sample or Population	Response Rate	Date of Last Survey
Graduates of Certificate Programs	Y N	_____	S P	_____	_____

Method: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

	Track	Functional Area Responsible	Sample or Population	Response Rate	Date of Last Survey
Non-returning Students	Y N	_____	S P	_____	_____

Method: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

	Track	Functional Area Responsible	Sample or Population	Response Rate	Date of Last Survey
Students Who Transfer To Another Institution	Y N	_____	S P	_____	_____

Method: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does your institution use the same survey form to follow-up all of the above or does it use different forms?
___ Same ___ Different

If different, please describe how your institution separates these groups.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does your institution use any other method for follow-up besides a survey? Y N

If yes, please describe this method. _____

_____

_____

_____

Employment Information

How is it determined whether students received employment in their "area of training"?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Employer Survey

Does your institution conduct an employer survey? Y N

Which functional area is responsible for collecting this information?_____

How does your institution identify and select the employers surveyed?_____

_____

_____

_____

Does your institution collect from a sample or population? S P

How is your institution's sample or population defined?_____

_____

_____

_____

What was the shortest and longest length of time between the students' graduation dates and the employer survey? (Example of answer: 4 to 16 months) ____ to ____ months

When was the last survey conducted?_____ What was the response rate?_____

If your institution uses any method besides a survey for student follow-up with employers, please describe.

_____

_____

_____

_____

TEX-SIS Follow-up System

Does your institution use the services of Jim Reed's Student Information Systems? Y N

If yes, which of the following components of TEX-SIS does your institution have processed?

___ Students' Educational Intent
___ Withdrawal Follow-up
___ Nonreturning Student Follow-up
___ Graduate Follow-up
___ Employer Follow-up
___ Adult Vocational/Continuing Education Follow-up
___ Occupational Completer and Follow-up Reporting
___ TEX-SIS JOBS

Please define the following as it applies to your institution:

1. Strengths of TEX-SIS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Weaknesses of TEX-SIS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

If your institution does **not** use TEX-SIS, please answer the following two questions:

1. Has your institution used this system in the past? Y N

2. If yes, why did your institution discontinue using this system? _____

_____

_____

_____

DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCES

Computing Capabilities

Are student records kept on a mainframe computer? Y N

If yes, please describe the mainframe. _____

_____

Are student records kept on a personal computer? Y N

Is student tracking data manipulation done primarily on a personal computer or through the mainframe?
personal computer____ mainframe____

Are personal computers available for purposes of student tracking? Y N
If yes, how many?_____

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "very easy" and 5 being "very difficult", how would you rate the process for accessing student records for purposes of tracking student populations?

1 2 3 4 5

Which functional areas have access to student records for purposes of data collection and analysis?

_____

_____

Description of Institutional Research

Does your school have a separate institutional research office or do these responsibilities fall under the auspices of another functional area?
Separate institutional research office ___ Other functional area: ___
Which functional area: _____

To whom or to what area do your institutional researchers report ?_____

_____

How many people does your institution have working in institutional research?
full-time: professional ___ support staff ___
part-time: professional ___ support staff ___

What are the roles of faculty and advisory committees in setting the priorities for institutional research?

_____

_____

_____

_____

LONESTAR

Has your institution been involved with LONESTAR? Y N

If **no**, why not?_____

_____

_____

Did your institution attempt to implement LONESTAR? Y N

If **no**, why not?_____

_____

If **no**, are there any plans to implement LONESTAR in the future? Y N

If your institution attempted to implement LONESTAR, was it successful [Y N] **or** is your institution still in the process of implementing LONESTAR ___?

If **no**, why was it unsuccessful? _____

_____

How long, in months, did it take to successfully implement LONESTAR?_____
(successful implementation meaning production of the first usable report)

Check the LONESTAR reports that you produced.

___ Institution-Level Progress Reports (2)
___ Institution-Level Performance Report (1)
___ Institution-Level Remediation Status Reports (3)
___ State-Level Progress Report (1)
___ State-Level Remediation Status Reports (2)

To which functional areas were these reports sent?_____

_____

Did your institution encounter any problems in implementing LONESTAR? Y N

If **yes**, what kind of problems?_____

_____

_____

_____

Please list the cohort(s) your institution has tracked with LONESTAR. _____

How many people worked on the implementation?_____

From which department(s) of your institution were they?_____

_____

What are their job titles?_____

_____

Did your institution make any changes or adaptations to the LONESTAR programs? Y N

If **yes**, how did it change or adapt the programs?_____

_____

_____

Is your institution still updating and maintaining the files? Y N

If **no**, why did your institution discontinue?_____

_____

_____

If your institution is updating and maintaining the files, are reports still produced? Y N

Does your institution produce some____ or all____ of the possible reports?

If **some**, which of the following reports are produced?

___ Institution-Level Progress Reports (2)
___ Institution-Level Performance Report (1)
___ Institution-Level Remediation Status Reports (3)
___ State-Level Progress Report (1)
___ State-Level Remediation Status Reports (2)

How are these reports used?_____

_____

_____

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Please check the following areas where technical assistance concerning follow-up procedures/methods would be beneficial to your institution.

___ personal computer selection
___ personal computer use
___ LAN (Local Area Network) selection
___ LAN use
___ mainframe equipment selection
___ mainframe equipment use
___ available personal computer software
___ survey development
___ survey methodology
___ statistical software use - mainframe
___ statistical software use - personal computer
___ statistical data analysis
___ implementation of tracking procedures
___ ways to increase response rates
___ organizational development relevant to student tracking (coordinating departments; involving faculty)
___ interagency coordination
___ reporting procedures
___ other (please specify): _____

What types of assistance would your institution prefer?
(Please rank responses with "1" being the most preferred, "2" the next preferred, etc.
If responses have equal preference, give the same ranking number to each.)

___ on-site consultations
___ workshops/seminars
___ written materials
___ other (please specify): _____

Return to: Dr. Sharon R. Smith
Grant Manager
Office of Research
Dallas County Community College District
701 Elm Street
Dallas, TX 75202-3299